

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 18148 161321Z
ACTION ERDA-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ERDE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 FEA-01
ACDA-07 IO-13 EB-07 NRC-05 OES-06 IGA-02 JUSE-00 /103 W
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O R 161252Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0099
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 18148

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR TECH IN
SUBJECT: TARAPUR: PRESS STORY ON BUY BACK

1. TEJA TELEPHONED THE CHARGE ON DECEMBER 15 TO CALL OUR ATTENTION TO A PRESS STORY WHICH HE SAID HAD BEEN WRITTEN BY ARTHUR GAVESTON ON THE SUBJECT OF BUY-BACK OF INDIAN NUCLEAR FUEL AND WHICH TEJA SAID HAD RUN IN THE DECEMBER 12 ISSUE OF THE WASHINGTON POST. TEJA SAID THAT HE WAS DISTRESSED TO FIND THAT SO MUCH OF WHAT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS HAD APPEARED IN THE STORY. IT HAD BEEN THE GOI UNDERSTANDING, TEJA SAID, THAT THE SUBSTANCE OF DISCUSSIONS ON THE TARAPUR ISSUE BETWEEN THE US AND INDIA WOULD NOT BE DISCLOSED TO THE PRESS. HE NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME "ERRONEOUS ATTIBUTION" TO AN INDIAN SOURCE.

2. THE CHARGE REPLIED THAT THE PROPOSAL TO REPURCHASE INDIAN NUCLEAR FUEL OF NECESSITY HAD BECOME A MATTER OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE BECAUSE OF THE NRC REQUIRMENTS FOR OPEN CONSIDERATION OF THE TARAPUR LICENSE ISSUE AND THE NEEDS OF AMBASSADOR SAXBE TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR THE INTERIM LICENSE. THE CHARGE SAID HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH PUBLICITY GAVE THE GOI. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE USG HAD SIMILAR NEEDS TO EXAMINE NUCLEAR ISSUES OPENLY IN ORDER TO MEET CONCERNS OF THE US CONGRESS AND PEOPLE. IT WAS NECESSARY TO FIND A MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN BOTH OF THESE REQUIREMENTS. THE CHARGE INDICATED HE WOULD REPORT GOI CONCERN AND INQUIRE REGARDING ANY FURTHER COMMENTS THE USG MIGHT HAVE ON THE MATTER.

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 18148 161321Z

3. COMMENT: DESPITE THE PRESS CONTROLS WHICH ENABLE THE GOI TO LIMIT PUBLICATION OF MATERIALS ON TARAPUR ISSUE, THE GOI REMAINS HYPERSENSITIVE TO PRESS ATTENTION TO THE US-INDIAN DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT. THE GOI PROBLEM IS PROBABLY NOT SO MUCH WITH THE INDIAN PUBLIC AS WITH ELEMENTS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF WHICH OPPOSE SETHNA'S POLICY OF WORKING WITH THE USG IN QUEST OF A SOLUTION.

4. WE WOULD WELCOME ANY COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT WHICH THE DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE WHICH WE COULD CONVEY TO MEA. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE THE TEXT OF THE ARTICLE FROM THE POST.
SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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